

The Grow Academy

Purpose

The Division of Juvenile Corrections (DJC) recognizes the expanding need for community programming for delinquent, high school credit deficient youth. The Grow Academy is designed to meet this need by offering an evidence-based correctional program consisting of an agriculturally-based educational curriculum, cognitive-behavioral treatment and community partnerships to reduce recidivism among youth.

As an alternative to juvenile incarceration, a direct county commitment, or for youth returning from a Juvenile Correctional placement, the Grow Academy teaches youth the skills to successfully reintegrate into and be productive members of their communities.

Location

The Grow Academy is conveniently located approximately 10 miles south of Madison, WI at 4986 County Highway M, Oregon, WI, 53575.



The Grow Academy's Garden

What It Is

The Grow Academy is a DJC program offering comprehensive treatment for youth including:

- 24/7 supervision and support
- An agricultural science curriculum to be used both inside and outside of the classroom
- Youth engagement in the local food economy through economic and community partnerships
- An evidence-based skill development program to help youth identify, control, and change thinking and beliefs

Whom It Serves

The Grow Academy's residential program serves up to twelve male youth ages 14-18 in a 120-day program. Youth can start at any point in the program once screened and approved by DJC.

Referrals

Youth referrals may come as a result of:

- Court ordered participation via the Experiential Education Program, s. 938.34(7g)
- Stayed correctional court orders, s. 938.34(16)
- Direct placements, where youth are released to the Grow Academy after 21 days in reception at Lincoln Hills School
- A step-down from Lincoln Hills School

Community Partners

To ensure community protection, high-quality care, and youth accountability and competency building, DJC works with a coalition of partners. These include:

- Community Ground Works
- Dogs on Call
- Madison Area Technical College
- Madison-Area Community Action Coalition
- UW Extension
- UW Madison

Together these partners provide services and supplemental curricula in horticulture, aquaponics, nutrition education, gardening, composting, poultry, and employment readiness.

Youth not only learn valuable skills from working with these organizations but also donate products grown on-site to local food pantries and sell products to local purchasers.



Youth selling produce at a Grow Academy Farmer's Market

Grow Academy's agricultural science curriculum offering high school credit is focused on core curriculum themes of:

- Plants – organic vegetable farming, aquaponic and hydroponic technology
- Soils & Composting
- Elements – energy, air and water
- Pollinators
- Animal Husbandry
- Food Systems
- Wood, Lumber and Carpentry
- Culture, Heritage and Grandmothers
- Nutrition
- Wellness
- Ecology
- Expressive Arts



Youth winterizing the Grow Academy's chicken coop

For information on the referral process and criteria, please e-mail us at:

GrowAcademy@wisconsin.gov

Or visit our website:

<http://doc.wi.gov/families-visitors/juvenile-services>

and follow the link:

[The Grow Academy](#)

To get a firsthand look at the Grow Academy program find us on YouTube at:

"The Grow Academy"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ZaAM1MJS1s>



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The Division of Juvenile Corrections promotes a juvenile justice system that balances protection of the community, youth accountability and competency building for responsible and productive community living.